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I live less than 1/2 mile from Union Pacific (and other) railroad tracks  
in Webster Groves. You can hear the trains going by from anywhere in Webster.

1 Studies have been done since the early 1960's (1) on how to deal with the high level wastes generated by the nuclear power industry. We fought against building these plants for over 20 years. You built them anyway. Now we have to deal with permanent storage of material that should never have been produced in the first place. St. Louis is still dealing with the waste of the Manhattan Project, the original nuclear bomb program. So we know the solutions are not simple.

2 These problems of generating high level, long lived radioactive materials as well as potential problems from nuclear accidents, weapons proliferation, and the sheer cost in dollars and lives of the complete cycle from mining to disposal have created the most expensive electricity ever. We used it long ago, but we will be paying for it forever. The natives of this land talked about protecting the land for seven generations. The nuclear program has generated a problem which will haunt not the next seven or the next 700 but the next seven thousand generations, should humans survive that long.

3... Given that wonderful history of the commercial nuclear program I would like to focus now on the local problem of transporting high level wastes through metropolitan areas. All high level waste casks should be moved by rail exclusively. There should be no trucking of waste casks in metropolitan areas. Build rail spurs to all plants, avoid trucking even to load casks as transfer stations would be vulnerable to accidents, and excess routine exposure. Does anyone remember SLAPS, Latty Avenue, or Hazelwood? DOE should build there own secure track around metropolitan areas. Preferably all shipments should be on secure, monitored rail lines and not mixed with commercial traffic.

3 cont.

There are (at least) three reasons that this high level radioactive waste should not be transported through cities.

4 **1. Routine exposure:**

Radioactive gases venting from casks and gamma radiation penetrating shielding will cause routine exposure of 20-30 mREM per hour to people located near the track.(2) Delays in and around major cities are likely keeping the train in a city longer than anticipated, increasing planned routine exposures. a quote from reference (2) :

"Risk studies have shown that radiological effects of normal, routine shipments pose a greater health risk than that from an accident. Therefore, several factors are considered by the DOT in suggesting routing requirements for nuclear waste. People living along the transport route, passengers in cars traveling the same highway, and truck drivers face exposure."

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5... 2. **Accidents will happen.**

5 cont. Example: A coal train destroyed a house the other day, cleaning up two million pounds of coal will be bad enough, but casks of radioactive waste would require even more specialized handling, and consequent disruption of the vicinity (i.e. someone's neighborhood) of the accident. Evacuation of a residential neighborhood or downtown area would be extremely disruptive not to mention very expensive.

6 3. **Sabatoge, hijacking, etc. would be impossible to control in a densely populated area.**

One armor peircing shell would easily vent the radioactive gases from a cask. An anti tank missile would do a lot more damage and contaminate an area forever. Obviously no sane person would fire a weapon at a radioactive waste container. But unfortunately we do not live in a sane world. We worried at the turn of the New Year about terrorists blowing up buildings in Seattle or elsewhere. We are concerned about nuclear proliferation in North Korea and Iran. And now you want to take the most dangerous materials known to man routinely through our cities and suburbs? I don't think so! Why are we spending billions of dollars on StarWars technology to keep missiles from being fired at us from somewhere else in the world. A technology which we know will never work, and which just failed it's last test. And then turn around and put the stuff right smack in the heart of the city for anyone who can handle a shoulder launched anti tank missile to blow up and contaminate a large area. This just does not make sense.

3 cont. 7 **Keep this high level waste, which should never have been produced in the first place, well away from densely populated areas of the country. And let's stop making more, and move to safe and renewable sources of energy as soon as possible.**

Thank you.

Gavin Perry, Ph.D.

- (1) Holmes & Narver, Inc., 1962, Feasibility Study  
for Transportation Facilities to Nevada Test Site,  
Los Angeles, California. [MOL.19950509.0039]  
(<http://www.ymmp.gov/deisref/collection/disk19/003.pdf>)
- (2) Transport of High Level Radioactive Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel  
to the Proposed Repository at Yucca Mountain, NV  
Written by Regina Capurro for Dr.Reiter, CE 258, 12-7-98  
<http://www.vuse.vanderbilt.edu/~ceeinfo/courses/ce258/Cap.htm>